

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Please cancel Claims 6, 10-27, 29, 30, 32-36, and 38-41 without prejudice or disclaimer. The claims have been cancelled pursuant to a restriction election and Applicant reserves the right to assert these claims in any future divisional or continuation applications.

Please find the current status of the claims, as of the filing of this amendment paper, as follows:

1. (Original) A convex shaped die for gripping a tubular comprising:  
a back side configured for attachment to a jaw member, wherein said jaw member is attached to a gripping system for gripping tubulars;  
a front side for application of a gripping surface to grip said tubular, wherein said front side is adapted to grip the tubular;  
said front side further comprising at least one metallic overlay surface; and  
said at least one metallic overlay surface further comprising a granular particle surface applied over said at least one metallic overlay, wherein said granular particle surface engages said tubular initiating improved gripping.
2. (Original) The die of Claim 1, further comprising a jaw member, wherein said back side of said die is detachably affixed to said jaw member.
3. (Original) The die of Claim 2, wherein said jaw member is a part of a gripping tong system.
4. (Original) The die in Claim 1, further comprising a metallic material, wherein said at least one metallic overlay is of a material softer than said metallic material.
5. (Original) The granular particle coating of Claim 1, further comprising a tungsten carbide material.

6. Canceled.

7. (Original) A gripping system for gripping tubulars comprising:

at least one tubular to be gripped;

a die comprising a metallic material, said die having a front side and a back side wherein said front side is of a substantially convex shape;

said front side of said substantially convex shaped die further comprises at least one metallic overlay;

said front side of said die further comprising a granulated particle surface applied on top of said at least one metallic overlay, wherein said granulated particle surface engages said tubular;

a jaw member wherein said back side of die is detachably affixed to said jaw member, and wherein said jaw member allows said die to engage said tubular;

said jaw member being pivotally attached to a rotationally capable drag ring, wherein said rotationally capable drag ring controls a gripping force of said die against said tubular;

a substantially cylindrical apparatus, wherein said cylindrical apparatus is fixedly attached to said rotationally capable drag ring;

a band, having two ends, disposed about said substantially cylindrical apparatus;

said band further having an outside surface and an inside surface wherein a friction material is disposed about said inside surface; and

an apparatus for exerting a force on said band wherein said force causes said friction material to slidably engage said substantially cylindrical apparatus to retard a rotation of said rotationally capable drag ring and substantially cylindrical apparatus, whereby said retarding of rotation increases the force of gripping by said die of said tubular.

8. (Original) The gripping system of Claim 7, wherein said apparatus for exerting a force is a conventional actuated hydraulic cylinder.

9. (Original) The gripping system of Claim 7, further comprising an adaptor, having a first end and a second end, wherein said first end is detachably affixed to said back of said die, and wherein said second end is detachably affixed to said jaw member.

10-27. Canceled.

28. (Original) A gripping system comprising:

a tubular to be gripped by said system;

at least one die;

at least one jaw member;

an adaptor, wherein said adaptor extends radially said at least one jaw member, and wherein said adaptor fits between said at least one die and said at least one jaw member;

a drag ring, wherein said jaws are pivotally attached to said drag ring;

a brake drum fixedly attached to said drag ring; and

a band disposed about said brake drum wherein said band exerts a braking friction to said brake drum when activated.

29-30. Canceled.

31. (Original) The gripping system of Claim 28, wherein die surface is substantially convex in shape.

32-36. Canceled.

37. (Original) A method of gripping a tubular comprising the steps of:

providing at least one substantially convex die;

coating said at least one substantially convex die with at least one metal overlay and a granular particle surface;

attaching the die to a jaw member;

pivotally attaching said jaw member to a drag ring;

fixedly attaching a brake drum to said drag ring;

disposing a braking band about said brake drum, wherein said braking band applies a frictional force to said drum when activated;

gripping a tubular with said at least one substantially convex die;

activating said braking band to provide frictional force against drum; and

providing said braking action to generate sufficient predetermined torque to turn tubular.

38-41. Canceled.

42. (Original) The method of Claim 37, further comprising the step of attaching an adaptor, wherein said adaptor extends radially said at least one jaw member, and wherein said adaptor fits between said at least one die and said at least one jaw member.